

XIII.—On Mammals from near Tinogasta, Catamarca,
collected by Sr. Budin. By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

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DURING December and January Sr. Budin made a collection in a hilly district known as La Puntilla, near Tinogasta, Catamarca. La Puntilla would appear to be a few miles out from Tinogasta towards Copacabana, at an altitude of about 1000 metres.

The collection is not a large one, as the place did not prove very favourable for general collecting; but among the eight species of which it consists not only is there a new tuco-tuco, but representatives of a highly remarkable new genus of Octodonts related to *Aconaemys*, of which it seems to be a non-fossorial ally with a strong external resemblance to *Octodontomys*. This is a very striking discovery, and one of which Sr. Budin may well be proud, adding as it does a distinct new type to so peculiar a group.

In spite of the ants, which, as usual in summer collecting, formed a terrible plague, the specimens sent are all beautifully prepared, and form a valuable addition to the National Collection.

1. *Hesperomys musculus*, Thos.

♂. 856; ♀. 835, 893.

2. *Hesperomys murillus cordovensis*, Thos.

♂. 876, 892.

The determinations of the specimens of *Hesperomys* are very doubtful, and must await further material for revision. Female examples showing the number of mammae are especially desirable.

"Caught among the piles of branches in the cultivated fields."

3. *Graomys cachinus*, All.

♂. 833, 837, 840, 842, 846, 851, 857, 861, 862, 865, 883, 884, 886, 894, 899.

♀. 853, 854, 858, 866, 869, 872, 873, 875, 889, 895, 896, 898.

In marked contrast to the state of things at Chumbicha

and Otro Cerro * we have here only a single form of *Graomys*, all the specimens of this fine series being practically identical in size. But a rather considerable number of them are immature.

4. *Phyllotis* sp. (?).

♀ . 834 (young).

Too young for determination.

5. *Akodon alterus*, Thos.

♂ . 841, 859, 878, 890; ♀ . 839, 843, 867, 887, 897.

Very similar to our series from Otro Cerro.

No. 878, quite young, shows that *m'* has a well-defined anterior median groove at its tip.

6. *Octomys mimax*, gen. et sp. n.

♂ . 850, 848 (young); ♀ . 838, 845, 880.

OCTOMYS †, gen. nov. (Octodontidæ).

General external characters and shape of skull about as in *Octodontomys*; molar structure approximately as in *Aconemys*, of which it is probably a non-fossorial rock-inhabiting representative.

External characters very much as in *Octodontomys*, and, indeed, as in many other rock-inhabiting dry-country Muridæ, such as the larger gerbils—the light colour, whitish under surface, large ears, and long tufted tail all being characters of such animals. Indeed, the resemblance to *Octodontomys gliroides* is almost complete, so that even as species the two might readily be mistaken for each other. Structure of ears and feet very much as in the older known animal, though the granulation of the soles is a little less coarse.

All these characters present a striking contrast to those of the one Octodont genus with more or less similar teeth—namely, *Aconemys* (*Schizodon* of Waterhouse),—which is a fossorial short-eared, long-clawed, dark-bellied, and short-tailed form, as different as possible from the present animal.

Skull also with the general shape of that of *Octodontomys*, less like that of *Octodon*, wholly unlike that of the fossorially

* Cf. Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (9) iii. p. 494 (1919).

† Not only does this animal belong to the group whose dental formula gave rise to the name *Octodon*, but its molars themselves have a pattern nearly resembling the figure 8.

specialized *Aconæmys*. Muzzle slender. Supraorbital edges sharp, not beaded, without postorbital processes. Interparietal region without ridges, even in old specimens. A large supra-meatal island visible on the top of the skull. Palatal foramina short and broad, with a broad median septum. Mesopterygoid fossæ narrow, pointed anteriorly, reaching forward to the level of the middle of m^2 . Bullæ very large, larger than in any other member of the group.

Teeth.—Incisors of medium strength, more opisthodont than in any of the allied genera (again making a parallel to certain Gerbillines), the incisive angle, as measured from the surface of the tooth-row, about 76° , but, owing to the hypertrophy of the bullæ, they appear still more turned in backwards in relation to the general lines of the skull.

Molars rootless, their pattern strikingly like that in *Aconæmys* (figured by Waterhouse*), the three anterior teeth above and below 8-shaped, with two subequal lobes. M^3 and m_3 with the posterior lobe reduced. A capsule appearing on the outer side of the jaw at the root of m_2 .

Genotype. *Octomys mimax*, sp. n.

The Octodontinæ—if we accept the obviously correct exclusion of *Abrocoma* from them advocated by Miller and Gidley†—fall into two groups, one with crescentic and the other with 8-shaped teeth. Each of these groups has, again, fossorial and non-fossorial members, *Octodon* and *Octodontomys* being the non-fossorial members of the crescent-toothed group and *Ctenomys* the fossorial, while in the other group *Spalacopus* and *Aconæmys* are both fossorial, and the present new genus now supplies to it a non-fossorial representative.

This handsome and remarkable animal, so strikingly like *Octodontomys* externally but so different from it essentially, is one of the most striking novelties that I have had the opportunity of describing from Argentina, and Sr. Budin is to be congratulated on so fine a discovery.

Octomys mimax, sp. n.

Size and general external appearance about as in *Octodontomys gliroides*. Colour of body above pale drabby buff. Under surface white, the hairs along the median area white

* Nat. Hist. Mamm. ii. pl. viii. fig. 4 (1848).

† Journ. Wash. Acad. Sci. viii. p. 445 (1918).

to their bases, but laterally they have pale slaty bases; line of demarcation not strongly marked. Ears large, with whitish tufts at their anterior base and on the neck behind them; their surface brown flesh-colour with fine white hairs scattered over them. Hands and feet white. Tail long, hairy, becoming heavily tufted terminally, the proximal half buffy below and buffy mixed with blackish above, the terminal tuft either mixed buffy and dark blackish brown throughout or the end wholly blackish brown; end-hairs attaining over 40 mm. in length.

Skull as above described.

Dimensions of the type:—

Head and body 165 mm.; tail 179; hind foot 34·5; ear 25·3.

Skull: greatest length 44; condylo-incisive length 41·7; zygomatic breadth 21; nasals $15 \times 4\cdot7$; interorbital breadth 9·5; least breadth across brain-case 17·5; bi-meatal breadth 21·6; palatilar length 16·5; palatal foramina $3\cdot7 \times 3\cdot2$; diagonal horizontal length of bulla 15; upper molar series (crowns) 8·6.

Type. Adult female. B.M. no. 20. 5. 11. 33. Original number 880. Collected 5th January, 1920.

Sr. Budin says of this animal that the specimens were captured among some large rocks which had fallen from a cliff in a ravine where there was a little water. It appeared to be very rare, as he was only able to find two of its habitations, close to each other, and none in any of the other ravines in the neighbourhood. It was also entirely unknown to the natives.

7. *Ctenomys coludo*, sp. n.

♂. 849, 870, 874, 879, 885, 891; ♀. 836, 877.

A rather large pale species, with comparatively long tail.

Size fairly large, though less than in *C. knighti*. Fur rather thin and poor. General colour above pale, about as in *C. juris*, paler than in most species, though not so pale as in *luteolus* and *opimus*; dorsal colour most nearly matching "saya brown"; sides and under surface little paler. Area round ears without special markings. Hairs of hands and feet dull whitish. Tail rather longer than usual in the genus, dull brown along the top, though some of the crest-hairs are whitish; sides and below dull white.

Skull rather slender, the interorbital region and brain-case narrow. Nasals broad in front, evenly narrowed backwards.

Frontal region flat. Interparietal perceptible in all specimens, even in the type, which is old enough to have its basilar suture partially closed. Line of posterior ridges directly transverse. Outer base of anteorbital foramen very slender. Malar ridges particularly strongly marked, sharp, the surface concave below them. Meatal area, as viewed from above, apparently larger than usual. A well-marked bulla-island visible on top of skull. Opening of choanæ not very sharply angular, level with the middle of m^2 . Bullæ large and swollen, larger than in *knighti* and nearly as large as in *luteolus*, both of these being larger species.

Molars small in comparison with the size of the animal. Longer diameter of m^3 scarcely greater than shorter.

Dimensions of the type:—

Head and body 205 mm.; tail 97; hind foot 36.5.

Skull: greatest median length 47; gnathion to back of bulla 49; condylo-incisive length 47.5; zygomatic breadth 31; nasals 17.5×8.3 ; interorbital breadth 9.3; least breadth across brain-case 18; bi-meatal breadth 31; palatilar length 21.7; diagonal horizontal length of bulla 18.5, breadth of bulla at right angles to last, exclusive of meatal tube, 9.5; upper molar series (crowns) 8.8, oblique diameter of m^1 3.6, of m^3 1.7.

Type. Fully adult male. B.M. no. 20. 5. 11. 39. Original number 891. Collected 17th January, 1920.

This tuco-tuco is readily recognizable by its uniform pale colour, comparatively long tail, narrow skull, large bullæ, and the other characters above detailed. As usual in *Ctenomys*, there appear to be no characters indicative of any group-relationship, but of the two species geographically nearest to it, *C. knighti* of Otro Cerro is much darker in colour, with shorter tail, broader frontal region, and larger teeth, while *C. fochi* of Chumbicha is little more than half its bulk, besides differing in other respects.

Sr. Budin found what he believed to be evidence that these tuco-tucos had cannibal propensities, and devoured the dead bodies of such of their comrades as were caught in the traps. This habit is common in Muridæ, but I think had not been before observed in Octodontidæ.

8. *Caviella maenas*, Thos.

♂. 844, 852, 860; ♀. 832, 847, 855, 863, 864, 868, 871, 881, 882, 888.